

## Document A:

### **Source: Juan Gines de Sepulveda, Spanish Journal on the Indians, 1547**

The Spanish have the perfect right to rule these barbarians of the New World who in prudence, skill, virtues and humanity are as inferior to Spanish as children to adults or women to men, for there exists between the two as great a difference as between savage and cruel races and the most merciful... You surely do not expect me to recall at length the prudence and talents of the Spanish... And what can I say of the gentleness and humanity of our people, who even in battles after having gained victory put forth their greatest effort and care to save the greatest possible number of the conquered and to protect them from the cruelty of their supposed allies... they have established their nation in such a way that no possess anything individually, neither house nor a field for everything to their masters whom they call kings and by whose whims they live by more than their own and desire of these rulers, possessing no liberty... And fulfillment of all of this under no arms, is a definite sign of the servile and base soul of these barbarians... I do not say to our domination, but to a servitude less harsh as they have been born to slavery and not to a civic and liberal life, who are barbarous and impious and inhuman.

## Document B:

### **Source: Bartolome de Las Casa, On the Destruction of the Indies, 1540's**

The Indies were discovered in the year 1492. The year following, Spanish Christians went to inhabit them, so that it is since forty-nine years that numbers of Spaniards have gone there: and the first land, that they invaded to inhabit, was the large and most delightful isle of Hispaniola... There are numberless other islands, and very large ones... that were all—and we have seen it—as inhabited and full of their native Indian peoples as any country in the world... Among these gentle sheep... the Spaniards entered... like wolves, tigers, and lions which had been starving for many days, and since forty years they have done nothing else; nor do they otherwise at the present day, than outrage, slay, afflict, torment, and destroy them... We are assured that our Spaniards, with their cruelty and execrable works, have depopulated and made desolate the great continent, and that more than ten kingdoms, larger than all Spain... although formerly full of people, are now deserted through tyranny, by the infernal deeds and tyranny of the Christians... Two ordinary and principal methods have the self-styled Christians, who have gone there, employed in extirpating these miserable nations... The one, by unjust, cruel, and tyrannous wars. The other, by slaying all those who might aspire to... liberty or to escape from the torments that they suffer, such as all the native lords and adult men... The reason why the Christians have killed and destroyed such infinite numbers of souls is solely because they have made gold their ultimate aim, seeking to load themselves with riches in the shortest time... These lands, being so happy and so rich, and the people so humble, so patient, and so easily subjugated, they have... taken no more account of them... than—I will not say of animals, for would to God they had considered and treated them as animals—but as even less than the dung in the streets... In this way have they cared for their lives—and for their souls: and therefore, all the millions above mentioned have died without faith and without sacraments. And it is... admitted... by all... that the Indians throughout the Indies never did any harm to the Christians: they even esteemed them as coming from heaven, until they and their neighbors had suffered the same many evils, thefts, deaths, violence, and visitations at their hands...